Statement by
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One of the implications of the bracer program that somebody ought to look into, is the effect that it is having on the Mexican economy. It is quite a drain on the labor supply in Mexico and this is making many of the employers unhappy. It is particularly true in agriculture. These men are needed right not to do farm work in Mexico, and many of the Mexican farmers are screaming to heaven. Now of course, farm labor in Mexico pays almost nothing and this is the root of the whole trouble in a sense. It would be accurate to say that there is an over supply of labor in Mexico and for this reason the bracero program might be defended. But this is true only in the sense that the Mexican economy cannot transport the whole labor force at a decent standard of living. The Mexican government is to blame for this in a way, due to the fact that it is placing an overwhelming emphasis on the industralization and paying very little attention to the problem of agriculture.

Obviously, it would be very interesting to try to find out what the bracero program is doing to life in the little rural villages, where most of these men come from. Take for example, the state of Michoacán, I was down in Michoacán last summer and spent some time in a little village there. I discovered that every abel bodied man in the town had been to the U. S. at one time or another as a bracero. It goes almost without saying that this would have had some influence upon the life of the village, but the problem is that this influence may have been very subtle and very gradual and you would have had to know that village intimately before the program began, in order to have any idea of the sorts of changes that had taken place. There are many villages in the central plateu states like this one in which almost all the men have been to the U. S. As for changes in health and medical care are concerned, I would ask you first, where are the doctors? suppose these men go back to the village with a preference

for doctors as opposed to the 'curanderos", what are they going to be able to do about it? There are no doctors and furthermore the men in most cases do not have the money to pay for a doctor even if a doctor were available.

The thing that intrigues me most about the bracero program is the effect which I strongly suspect, it is having on the small Mexican-American communities which are scattered around in this area. Just for one example in a small town like Cucamonga or even Claremont possibly, where there is a relatively small Mexican-American community and where there is a relatively large bracero population living close by. It is conceivable that the presence of the Mexican national shouldn't have an important impact upon the lives of the Mexican-American. For example the Consul General in Los Angeles, Sr. Dominguez, told me that he has every reason to believe that the braceros are upsetting the family life of the local people in various ways. In many cases the bracero will marry local girls even though they may already have a family back in Mexico. Another thing is that many of these men have syphilis. We have recently heard that the venereal disease rates among the Mexican population of Los Angeles have gone up sharply in the last couple of years and I seriously wonder to what extent the braceros are responsible for this.

Perhaps the most basic question involved here in the influx of the bracero program on the acculturation and integration of the ~~presence~~ persons of Mexican descent who are already in the country now. I don't come from Southern California, so that all I can give you is my impressions based upon what I have seen on visits here. But I rather suspect that some of these small Mexican-American settlemtnts that I was mentioning a moment ago are more Mexican now than they were, let us say, 15 years ago. I have been in restuarants and bars, for example, where nobody

was speaking English and where all the dishes being served were Mexican dishes such as menudo, and I just wonder if this isn't due to the contuning influx of people recently arrived from Mexico. In this came connection it would be extremely interesting to find something about the influence of the Mexican nationals on the struggle of the Mexican-American for political expression. Obviously the bracero including those who come up here more or less permanently on the visas are not eligible to vote and are consequently apathetic when it comes to elections. I wonder if some of this apathy may not be contagious and in some way we would have here another example of regression.

Still another way in which I strongly suspect that the bracero program is having unfortunate results as far as the domestic population is concerned, is in the matter of unionization. For one reason or another the Mexican national does not join labor unions either because he is not eligible or he has had no experience with unions in Mexico or he feels ht cannot afford to pay the dues or for whatever reason, When you have ~~arou~~ 500,000 people floating around the country completely outside the labor movement, this obviously makes the job of the unions to improve working conditions and wages, more difficult.

Still another group which I should think is profoundly affected by the bracero program consists of businessmen both Spanish speaking and Anglo. I would like to know to what extent they are making money from the bracero and I would like to know their opinions regarding the program.